

Editorial: The English of Business/The Business of English

Marshall McLuhan's observation (1962) that the world is becoming a global village as a result of electronic interdependence is particularly true in today's business world. Technology has made it easier for a businessman in Manila, Philippines, to conduct business with a client in Chicago than with a compatriot in Zamboanga thanks to electronic mail, the fax, and satellite communications. And it is most likely that the language they will use together will be English. Even in face-to-face communication between non-native speakers of English, like a Japanese banker and his/her Turkish counterpart, English is more likely to be the medium of communication than either Japanese or Turkish.

This issue of the *Forum* features articles submitted in response to our April 1994 call for manuscripts on teaching English through the content of business and commerce. They approach the topic from varied perspectives, some describing a complete content-based course (Black, Mangilli-Climpson, McElreath and Shadrova), and others detailing an approach (Sheppard and Stoller, Yung, and Djiwandono) or a technique appropriate for EFL business students (Warwick and Bertini, Tanguay, and Caparrini). Whether using authentic text or specially written (fabricated) texts or eliciting text from the learners themselves, the teacher/authors aim at a logically coherent course design that draws upon language and content input for meaningful, task-based activities.

Though our focus is on pedagogical concerns and the register of business English, the article by Mangilli-Climpson reminds us that schools-especially private schools-have aims that are similar to businesses. Both respond to consumer demands and provide services to obtain profits. An English program director will need to conduct market research to identify what areas of language training are desired by target groups, and then go about assembling the human and material resources needed to provide the services (course instruction) that the consumers want at a price they can afford. Even the English teacher himself/herself may act as an entrepreneur taking risks, trying new approaches, and experimenting with different classroom structures to deliver a service valued by students and subsequently advertised by them. For a great many language schools and university departments of English, a content focus on business and commerce accords with the needs of more and more students. In times when university budgets are tight (which may be all the time), it is good business for English departments to teach business English.

In our ongoing efforts to make the *English Teaching Forum* a more practical resource for teachers worldwide, we have added a new page to the journal: Teacher Resources. This section will feature new publications and audio-video materials for EFL. In keeping with the theme of this issue, we feature materials that can be used for business English. -TJK